

**AGENDA:** September 10, 2002

**4.11**

**CATEGORY:** Consent

**DEPT.:** Community Development

**TITLE:** Set Date for Public Hearing Regarding  
Amendment to Area H of the Downtown  
Precise Plan to Clarify Height Limits

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Set date for public hearing for September 24, 2002 regarding amendment to Area H of the Downtown Precise Plan to clarify height limits.

**FISCAL IMPACT** – None.

### **BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

The purpose of this amendment is to clarify the existing height limitation in Area H (Historic Castro Street) area of the Downtown Precise Plan. The existing height limitation simply reads: "Maximum building height = three stories." The Precise Plan does not contain a definition of a "story," nor is there any limit to the height in feet of a three-story building.

Several recent considerations have indicated the need to clarify the Precise Plan height limit and to do this now rather than waiting to include the clarification in the current long-term work program updating the Downtown Precise Plan along all of Castro Street. The first consideration is the need to establish clear parameters for the design of a mixed-use parking garage at California and Bryant Streets. Secondly, during discussion of the difference between parking levels and stories for retail, office and residential floors, it was noted that the marketplace is changing, creating greater uncertainty about the types of buildings and uses that might be proposed and how that might affect overall building height.

The Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) at their August 7, 2002 meeting, voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council approve an amendment to the Downtown Precise Plan to clarify the height limits in Area H. Notice for the EPC meeting was sent to all property owners within Area H, as well as property owners, within 300' of Area H. In addition, developers of the new housing units within this area were asked to forward the notice to any new residents since, in most cases, the City would not yet have a record of those owners. The Commission recommends that: (1) the maximum number of stories does not include the levels of a parking structure as a story; (2) the maximum allowable height for buildings, including any parking levels, should be 55'; and (3) allows special architectural features to exceed the 55' height limit if determined to be appropriate through the design review process.

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**PUBLIC NOTICING** – Agenda posting.

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